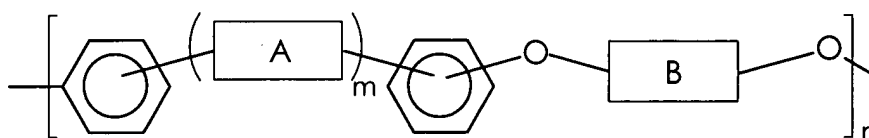
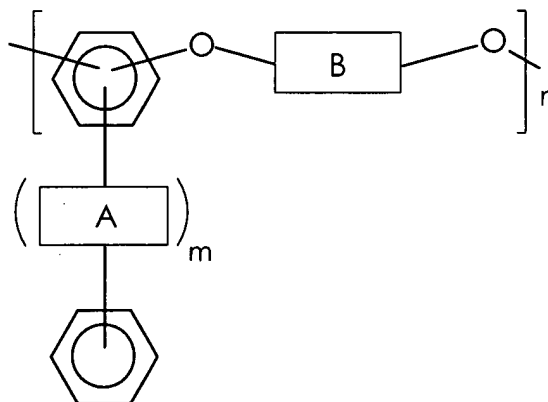


ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed is a process for preparing branched polyarylene ether polymers by (A) providing a reaction mixture comprising (i) a polyfunctional phenol compound of the formula $\text{Ar}(\text{OH})_x$ wherein $x \geq 3$ and wherein Ar is an aryl moiety or an alkylaryl moiety, provided that when Ar is an alkylaryl moiety at least three of the -OH groups are bonded to an aryl portion thereof, (ii) one or more linear polymers of the formula



or



wherein m is 0 or 1, A and B are as defined herein, and n is an integer representing the number of repeat monomer units, and (iii) a carbonate base; and (B) heating the reaction mixture and removing generated water from the reaction mixture, thereby effecting a polymerization reaction.